

50th Anniversary of Titles VII and VIII  
National Health Professions Education Day  
September 24, 2013

Fifty years ago today, President John F. Kennedy signed into law the Health Professions Educational Assistance Act of 1963 to address the country's shortage of health professionals. Under Title VII of the Public Health Service Act, this legislation authorized the first health professions training and loan programs and underscored the federal government's fundamental responsibility to help ensure a health care workforce for individuals and families across the country.

Shortly after, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Nurse Training Act of 1964, creating Title VIII nursing education programs.

Over the past five decades, Title VII and VIII programs have continued to respond to the nation's changing needs by recruiting and retaining aspiring health professionals across all disciplines to help fill gaps in the health workforce and raise the profile of important health issues, such as cultural competency, interprofessional education, and behavioral and mental health care.

Under HRSA's leadership, these programs are advancing innovations in improving the supply, diversity, and distribution of the health care workforce. Further, as millions of Americans gain access to affordable health insurance through the Affordable Care Act, Title VII and Title VIII programs will continue to play a significant role in helping ensure patient access to care. As we reflect on this milestone 50th anniversary, we recognize and applaud the vast accomplishments under Titles VII and VIII. With a strong health care workforce, we can help improve the health of our nation – now and for generations to come.